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ENG 3009G-001: Myth and Culture

Susan Bazargan
Eastern Illinois University

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English 3009-001 Myth and Culture
Fall Semester 2003
Dr. Susan Bazargan
TTH 9:30-10:45 CH 3609
Office: CH 3765 Phone: 581-6979
Office Hours: TTH 12-2
E-mail: sbazargan@eiu.edu

This course introduces you to the variety of ways in which “myth” has been conceptualized in human history, in the realms of cultural studies, literature, psychology, and politics. We’ll focus on myth as a cognitive construct that allows us to gain some insight into the cultural foundations of various ancient societies.

Course requirements:

1. Class attendance:

I have a strict attendance policy. If you have more than two unexcused absences during the semester, your grade for the semester will lose one-half point for each unexcused absence. If you are ill or have to leave campus because of a family emergency, please call my office and let me know.

2. Papers:

You will write three 4-page papers (typed, double-spaced). The first draft of the paper will be written in class. Using my comments and suggestions, you will revise, expand, and polish the paper at home. The second draft will receive a grade. English 3009 is a “writing-intensive” course, so you can submit one of your essays to your electronic writing portfolio.

3. Exams and quizzes:

You will take two exams during the semester. The first will cover all the material studied since the beginning of the semester; the second one will cover material studied since the first exam. Both exams will have two parts: a short-answer section followed by an essay question. Pop quizzes might be given occasionally, so come to class prepared!

Grading Policy and Scale:

Each paper is worth 20% (60% total), the two exams are worth 30%; the quizzes 10%.
A+: 98-100; A: 95-97; A-: 91-94; B+: 87-90; B: 82-86; B-: 81-85; C+: 77-80; C: 71-76;
C-: 69-70; grades below 70 are in the D range; grades below 60 fall in the F range.

Conferences:

Please stop by office to discuss any problem or question related to the course. You can also make an appointment if my regular office hours are inconvenient for you.

Other policies:

1. The English Department’s policy on plagiarism states that “Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—‘the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s original work’ (*Random*

House Dictionary of the English Language) has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.”

2. If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible

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Required texts:

Erdoes and Ortiz, *American Indian Myths and Legends*

Harris and Platzner, *Classical Mythology*

Martel, *The Life of Pi*

Kovacs, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*

Rinpoche, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*

Rosenberg, *World Mythology*

Scheub, *The African Storyteller*

Sproul, *Primal Myths*

Class Meetings and Readings:

8/26: Introduction to the course

8/28: Sproul, Introduction, pp. 1-14; Harris and Platzner, Chapter 2 (“Ways of Interpreting Myth”)

9/2: Chapter 2 continued; Sproul, Near Eastern Myths, pp. 80-86

9/4: Rosenberg, “The Enuma Elish” pp. 3-11 (bring also Sproul so that we can compare the two renditions; see Sproul, 91-113)

9/9: Rosenberg, “Osiris, Isis, and Horus” (pp. 12-21)

9/11: Sproul, from “the Genesis,” pp.122-126; from “The Book of Job,” pp. 130-133; from “The Koran” pp. 151-155.

9/16: Scheub, “Notes on Myth,” pp. 50-52. “The Creation” pp. 54-61, “God Creates Man and Woman” pp. 63-65.

9/18: First in-class writing

9/ 23: Scheub, “Notes on the Trickster” pp. 116-119; “Beiho Tricks his Uncles” pp. 145-149.

9/25 : Scheub, “The Magic Drum” pp. 164-171; Rosenberg, “Gassire’s Lute” pp. 521-526.

9/30: Erdoes and Ortiz, pp. 335-336; "Coyote, Iktome, and the Rock" pp. 337-339; "What's This? My Balls for your Dinner?" 339-341; "Adventures of Great Rabbit" pp. 347-352

10/2: Erdoes and Ortiz, "Hiawatha the Unifier" pp. 193-199; Rosenberg, "Lodge-Boy and Thrown-Away" pp. 622-624.

First essay is due

10/7: Harris and Platzner, Chapter 4, pp. 84-116

10/9: Chapter 4 continued

10/14: Second in-class writing

10/16: First exam

10/21: Rosenberg, "Medea" pp. 204-241

10/23: "Medea" continued; Rosenberg, "The Iliad," pp. 106-153

10/28: "The Iliad" continued

10/30: Kovacs, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*; see also Rosenberg, "The Epic of Gilgamesh"

11/4: Gilgamesh (continued)

11/6: Rosenberg, "The Ramayana" pp. 296-321

11/11: Rinpoche (read Chapters 1-5)

11/13: Rinpoche continued

Second essay is due.

11/18: Third in-class writing

11/20: Martel, *The Life of Pi*

Thanksgiving break

12/2: Martel continued

12/4: Martel continued

12/9: Martel continued. Evaluations. Third essay is due.

12/11: Second exam.